

Message Text

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SUBJECT:IDA COUNTRY ALLOCATION

1. THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF PAPER ENTITLED "U.S. THOUGHTS ON
IDA COUNTRY ALLOCATION" WHICH THE USG GAVE TO WORLD BANK MAY
13. EMBASSY IS AUTHORIZED TO GIVE THIS PAPER TO GOI FOR
LIMITED DISTRIBUTION. YOU SHOULD INDICATE THAT WE WANT TO
BE SURE THEY UNDERSTAND OUR PURPOSE. WE HAVE NOT CHANGED
OUR POSITION ON INDIA'S SHARE OF IDA LENDING AND ARE NOT
CAMPAIGNING FOR REDUCTION OF THAT SHARE. OUR PRIMARY GOAL
REMAINS FULL REPLENISHMENT, WHICH DEPENDS ON CONGRESSIONAL
SUPPORT. THE TRANSMITTAL OF OUR THOUGHTS ON OVERALL IDA
LENDING ALLOCATIONS TO THE WORLD BANK IS A STEP TOWARD THAT
GOAL. THESE THOUGHTS ARE INTENDED TO RESPOND TO CURRENT
WORLD ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND NOT DIRECTED AT INDIVIDUAL AL-
LOCATIONS. IN FACT, BY THE ALLOCATIONS PATTERN WHICH THIS
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PAPER OUTLINES, INDIA COULD GAIN AS WELL AS LOSE THE TRANS--
MITTAL OF THIS PAPER TO THE BANK WILL STRENGTHEN VUR HAND
WITH CONGRESS, WHERE THERE HAS BEEN CRITICISM THAT OUR IN-
FLUENCE WITH THE BANK IS NOT COMMENSURATE WITH THE SIZE OF
OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE BANK.

2. BEGIN TEXT: U.S. THOUGHTS ON IDA COUNTRY ALLOCATION IN-
TRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: THE BANK IS PREPARING A PAPER ON
THE ECONOMIC CRITERIA FOR THE COUNTRY ALLOCATION OF IDA FUNDS.
A PRELIMINARY VERSION IS EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED AROUND

MAY 15-20, WITH THE FINAL VERSION DUE TO BE PRESENTED FOR BOARD REVIEW BEFORE JUNE 30. THIS PAPER PRESENTS U.S. VIEWS ON THE ISSUE OF IDA COUNTRY ALLOCATION, PROPOSING A TWO-TIER SYSTEM.

THE FIRST TIER WOULD CONSIST OF DIVISION OF IDA RECIPIENTS INTO THREE GROUPS: LEAST DEVELOPED, OTHER POOREST, AND INTERMEDIATE. ALTHOUGH WE WOULD WANT TO AVOID PRECISE QUOTAS, A POTENTIAL RANGE OF FUNDING LEVELS WOULD BE DISTRIBUTED AMONGST THE THREE BROAD GROUPS ON THE BASIS OF CONSIDERATION OF A NUMBER OF FACTORS. THE SECOND TIER WOULD CONSIST OF THE ALLOCATION OF IDA FUNDS WITHIN EACH BROAD GROUP ON THE BASIS OF THE CURRENT CRITERIA, BUT WITH SPECIAL WEIGHT GIVEN TO FOUR VARIABLES: INTERNAL INCOME DISTRIBUTION, FOOD AND ENERGY REQUIREMENTS, RELATIVE DEBT SERVICE BURDENS, AND THE BLEND OF IBRD/IDA FUNDS. THE EFFECT ON ANY ONE COUNTRY WOULD DEPEND GREATLY UPON THE DEVELOPMENTAL PRIORITIES WHICH RECIPIENTS STRESSED. BEFORE DISCUSSING THESE TWO TIERS, HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO SUMMARIZE OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRENT CRITERIA FOR IDA COUNTRY ALLOCATION.

THE CURRENT CRITERIA - IN THE RECENT PAST, IDA HAS TAKEN ACCOUNT OF FOUR MAIN CRITERIA -- POVERTY, CREDITWORTHINESS, ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE, AND PROJECT AVAILABILITY.

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POVERTY - IDA RESOURCES HAVE INCREASINGLY BEEN RESERVED FOR COUNTRIES THAT ARE THE POOREST AS MEASURED BY PER CAPITA INCOME. ALTHOUGH A BROAD RANGE OF OTHER INDICATORS OF POVERTY ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, PER CAPITA INCOME LEVELS HAVE BEEN THE PRINCIPAL FACTOR.

TABLE I ILLUSTRATES THAT IDA ALLOCATIONS HAVE BEEN PROGRESSIVELY SHIFTED TO THE POOREST COUNTRIES HAVING LESS THAN 200 DOLS PER CAPITA INCOME (IN 1972), WHICH RECEIVED ABOUT 91 PERCENT OF TOTAL IDA RESOURCES IN FY 75-76. THE SHARE WITHIN THIS CATEGORY OF UN-DESIGNATED "LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES" INCREASED ONLY FROM 18 PERCENT IN FY 69-71 TO 22 PERCENT IN FY 72-74. IN FY 75-76, HENCE, THESE COUNTRIES, ACCOUNTING FOR 17 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL POPULATION OF IDA'S CURRENT RECIPIENTS, RECEIVED ABOUT A THIRD OF IDA LENDING.

THE SHARE OF COUNTRIES WITH PER CAPITA INCOMES OF THE INTERMEDIATE GROUP (201-375 DOLS PER CAPITA IN 1972) INCREASED FROM 13.0 PERCENT IN FY 69-71 TO 16.1 PERCENT IN FY 72-74, DUE IN PART TO A DETERIORATION IN THEIR CREDITWORTHINESS. HOWEVER, THEIR SHARE DECLINED TO 8.7 PERCENT IN FY 75-76 BECAUSE OF INCREASED EMPHASIS ON LENDING TO THE POOREST

AND THE PHASING OUT OF SOME OF THESE COUNTRIES.

THE SHARE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WITH PER CAPITA INCOME
OF MORE THAN 375 DOLS IN 1972 (OR 520 DOLS IN 1975 DOLLARS)
HAS DECLINED FROM 2.4 PERCENT IN FY 69-71 TO 1.7 PERCENT
IN FY 72-74; TO ONLY 0.1 PERCENT OF IDA FUNDS IN FY 75-76.

TABLE I DISTRIBUTION OF IDA CREDITS BY PER CAPITA INCOME
LEVELS OF COUNTRIES (ANNUAL AVERAGES) FY 61-76 OMITTED.

CREDITWORTHINESS - IDA FUNDS ARE NOT PROVIDED TO COUNTRIES
THAT ARE JUDGED ABLE TO ACCEPT EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE ON LESS
CONCESSIONARY OR CONVENTIONAL TERMS EVEN IF THE COUNTRY
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WOULD OTHERWISE BE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE IDA CREDITS. SINCE
THERE IS A CLOSE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN A COUNTRY'S POVERTY
AND THE TERMS ON WHICH IT CAN AFFORD TO BORROW, THE CREDIT-
WORTHINESS CRITERION TENDS TO REINFORCE THE POVERTY
CRITERION AS A REASON FOR IDA CREDITS TO BE CHANNELLED TO
THE POOREST COUNTRIES.

SINCE 1973, THE DEBT SITUATION OF THE LOW INCOME (BELOW
375 DOLS PER CAPITA) DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WORSENED CONSIDER-
ABLY AND HAS HAD A PROFOUND IMPACT ON TWO GROUPS OF DEVELOP-
ING COUNTRIES: THOSE AMONG THE POOREST (BELOW 200 DOLS)
WHOSE BALANCE OF PAYMENT POSITION HAS WORSENED PRIMARILY
BECAUSE OF SUBSTANTIAL INCREASES IN THEIR IMPORT BILLS
(AS A RESULT OF OIL AND FOOD PRICE INCREASES) AND THOSE
AMONG THE INTERMEDIATE GROUP (201-375 DOLS) THAT HAVE
EXPERIENCED THIS DIFFICULTY PRIMARILY BECAUSE OF THE DE-
CLINE IN THEIR EXPORT EARNINGS (AS A RESULT OF THE RECESS-
ION IN THE INDUSTRIAL WORLD).

THE INTERMEDIATE INCOME COUNTRIES HAVE A LARGER SHARE IN
DEBT SERVICING (43 PERCENT) THAN THEIR SHARE IN TOTAL OUT-
STANDING DEBT (29 PERCENT). THIS IS AN INDICATION OF THE
HARDER TERMS AT WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SECURE CAPITAL
IN RECENT YEARS. THESE COUNTRIES ARE LIKELY TO SEE A
FURTHER WORSENING OF THEIR DEBT PROBLEM.

TABLE II - DEBT POSITION OF COUNTRIES RECEIVING IDA
CREDITS OMITTED

PERFORMANCE - THE DISTRIBUTION OF IDA CREDITS IS AFFECTED
BY THE DEVELOPMENT EFFORT BEING MADE BY A COUNTRY, TAKING
INTO ACCOUNT THE COUNTRY'S RESOURCE BASE AND STAGE OF DE-
VELOPMENT. WHILE THIS CRITERION IS DIFFICULT TO APPLY IN
PRACTICE, IDA ATTEMPTS TO FOSTER POLICIES THAT WILL HASTEN
THE TIME WHEN RECIPIENT COUNTRIES WILL BE ABLE TO FINANCE
THEIR DEVELOPMENT FROM CONVENTIONAL SOURCES AND INCREASING-

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LY FROM THEIR DOMESTIC RESOURCES.

PROJECT AVAILABILITY - EVEN WHEN A COUNTRY QUALIFIES FOR IDA CREDITS UNDER THE CRITERIA MENTIONED ABOVE, THERE STILL HAVE TO BE AVAILABLE SOUND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WHICH MEET THE ASSOCIATION'S NORMAL FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRITERIA FOR PROJECT FINANCING.

THE FIRST TIER: THREE BROAD GROUPS - ONE COULD MAKE A DISTINCTION AMONG THREE BROAD GROUPS OF IDA RECIPIENT COUNTRIES DIFFERENT FROM THE THREE GROUPS DISCUSSED EARLIER IN THIS PAPER. THESE COULD BE: (1) THE LEAST DEVELOPED, A GROUP OF 29 LDCS DESIGNATED AS SUCH BY THE U.N.; (2) THE OTHER POOREST LDCS, WITH PER CAPITA INCOME LESS THAN 200 DOLS (IN 1972 DOLLARS), NOT DESIGNATED AS LEAST DEVELOPED; AND 3) THE INTERMEDIATE COUNTRIES, WHOSE PER CAPITA GNP RANGES FROM 200 TO 375 DOLS (IN 1972 DOLLARS). THE DISTRIBUTION OF IDA RESOURCES AMONG THESE GROUPS HAS SHOWN A TREND TOWARDS GREATER SHARES FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, WHICH ARE MOSTLY COUNTRIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, WITH RELATIVELY SMALLER SHARES FOR THE OTHER POOREST GROUP, WHICH ARE MOSTLY FROM SOUTH ASIA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA. THE INTERMEDIATE COUNTRIES, WHICH ARE SPREAD EQUALLY BETWEEN ASIA, AFRICA, EMENA, B/ AND LATIN AMERICA, HAVE RECEIVED A FLUCTUATING SHARE OF TOTAL IDA RESOURCES, AS IS SHOWN BY THE FOLLOWING DATA:
B/ EUROPE, MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA.

TABLE III - DISTRIBUTION OF IDA LENDING FY 69 - EIGHT-YEAR AVERAGE OMMITED.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF IDA LENDING AMONG THE THREE MAJOR RECIPIENT GROUPS MENTIONED ABOVE WAS NOT A MATTER OF CONSCIOUS POLICY DECISION BY IDA, BUT MERELY THE RESULT OF APPLYING IDA LENDING CRITERIA TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES.

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THE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS AMONG THESE GROUPS WITHIN A BROAD PERCENTAGE RANGE SHOULD DEPEND ON CONSIDERATION OF A NUMBER OF FACTORS. FOR INSTANCE, A BROAD INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS HAS EMERGED IN THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS TO THE EFFECT THAT INCREASED AID SHOULD GO TO THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES. THIS ARGUES FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE TREND WHICH HAS GIVEN AN INCREASED SHARE OF IDAS RESOURCES FOR THIS GROUP. ANOTHER FACTOR IS THE DESIRABILITY OF MAINTAINING BROAD DONOR SUPPORT FOR IDA AND THE FAVORABLE

EFFECT ON SUCH SUPPORT WHICH A BROAD GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF IDA'S RESOURCES, WITH DUE REGARD FOR COUNTRIES' POPULATIONS, WOULD HAVE. IN THIS REGARD, THE PRESENT BANK POLICY OF GRADUATING COUNTRIES FROM IDA ELIGIBILITY, EVEN

THOUGH THEY ARE BELOW THE PER CAPITA INCOME CUTOFF, DESERVES RECONSIDERATION. DECREASED EMPHASIS ON GRADUATION WOULD LIKELY REVERSE THE TREND TOWARDS LESS AID FOR THE INTERMEDIATE COUNTRIES. A THIRD CONSIDERATION IS THE QUESTION OF ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY AND THE AVAILABILITY OF PROJECTS. FINALLY, THE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE FROM OTHER SOURCES SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

ALL OF THESE FACTORS ARE IMPORTANT IN DECIDING INTER-GROUP ALLOCATION. BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER AND COMPLEXITY OF THE RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS, MEMBERS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS WOULD NO DOUBT REQUIRE THE ASSISTANCE OF BANK STAFF IN EVALUATING THEM. THEIR USE TOGETHER WITH A PERCENTAGE RANGE HOWEVER, WOULD PERMIT FLEXIBILITY IN A GIVEN YEAR IF NECESSARY BECAUSE, FOR INSTANCE, OF THE NON-AVAILABILITY OF VIABLE PROJECTS IN CERTAIN COUNTRIES.

IN SUM, IN CONSIDERING ALL THESE, AND OTHER FACTORS, A DISTRIBUTION OF IDA FUNDS AMONG THE GROUPS COULD PROBABLY BE MADE ALONG THE LINES OF THE AVERAGES FOR THE EIGHT YEARS LISTED IN TABLE III, BUT WITH A SLIGHTLY GREATER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PERCENTAGE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED WHILE PRESERVING THE RECENT HISTORICAL AVERAGE FOR THE INTERMEDIATE GROUP.

THE SECOND TIER: INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY CRITERIA - AFTER DISTRIBUTION HAD BEEN MADE IN A GENERAL FASHION BETWEEN THE BROAD GROUPS OF IDA RECIPIENTS, THE COUNTRY ALLOCATION PROCESS WOULD DERIVE FROM THE RELATIVE CHANGES IN THE ECONOMIC SITUATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES. THE PROCESS WOULD CONTINUE TO USE THE FOUR GENERAL IDA CRITERIA OF POVERTY, CREDITWORTHINESS, PERFORMANCE AND PROJECT AVAILABILITY. HOWEVER, IN VIEW OF CHANGING WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, ADDITIONAL WEIGHT WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE FOLLOWING FOUR VARIABLES:

(1) IMPROVED INCOME DISTRIBUTION. RATHER THAN EMPHASIZING SOLELY THE PER CAPITA INCOME OF A COUNTRY (THE COUNTRY'S OVERALL SITUATION WITHIN THE FIRST IDA CRITERIA), MORE FUNDS COULD BE DIRECTED TO LARGE POCKETS OF POVERTY. LARGE ELEMENTS OF A SOCIETY MAY BE AT THE ABSOLUTE POVERTY LEVEL (100 DOLS PER CAPITA), ALTHOUGH THE OVERALL INCOME LEVEL MAY BE HIGHER. THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF IDA'S TERMS COULD BE USED AS LEVERAGE TO STRENGTHEN A COUNTRY'S WILLINGNESS TO IMPROVE THE INTERNAL INCOME DISTRIBUTION.

(2) FOOD AND ENERGY DEFICITS. TWO OF THE GREATEST LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FACING THE LDCS TODAY ARE LONG-TERM FOOD SHORTAGES AND STEEP IMPORT COSTS FOR ENERGY. THEREFORE, PRIORITY SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHO ARE IN A CHRONIC FOOD OR ENERGY DEFICIT SITUATION TO ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS TO PLACE THE GREATEST EMPHASIS ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES.

(3) DEBT SERVICE. GIVEN THE RELATIVELY INCREASED DEBT BURDEN OF THE INTERMEDIATE IDA RECIPIENTS, THERE IS A NEED TO INCREASE IDA LENDING TO THOSE COUNTRIES WHOSE DEBT SERVICE BURDEN HAS INCREASED CONSIDERABLY SINCE 1973. WEIGHT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WOULD BE GIVEN TO THE LEVEL OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES, THE PROSPECTS FOR FUTURE EXPORTS, AND THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION.

(4) THE BLEND. FROM FY 74-76, THE AVERAGE BLEND OF IDA RECIPIENTS WAS 52 PERCENT IBRD FUNDS AND 48 PERCENT IDA FUNDS. PER CAPITA INCOME LEVELS HAVE PROVIDED SOME GUIDELINES TO THE MIX OF IBRD AND IDA FUNDS. FOR EXAMPLE, COUNTRIES BELOW 100 DOLS PER CAPITA INCOME HAVE RECEIVED ONLY IDA FUNDS. HOWEVER IN OTHER GROUPS, THE PATTERN HAS BEEN INCONSISTENT. THE INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY ALLOCATION PROCESS SHOULD TRY TO STANDARDIZE MUCH MORE CLOSELY THE BLEND AMONG COUNTRIES OF SIMILAR INCOME LEVELS. THE COUNTRY'S ABILITY TO REPAY HARDER LENDING AND THE NATURE OF THE PROJECT (E.G. REVENUE - PRODUCING) COULD ALSO BE CONSIDERED.

PROJECT AVAILABILITY - THE ROLE OF IDA STAFF IN DEVELOPING PROJECTS IS SIGNIFICANT, ALBEIT DIFFICULT TO DEFINE. THE BANK HAS RECENTLY EXPANDED ITS PROJECT PREPARATION FACILITY TO INCREASE ITS DIRECT EFFORT TO HELP THOSE COUNTRIES (MOSTLY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA) WHO HAVE FEW HUMAN RESOURCES WITH WHICH TO DEVELOP FEASIBLE PROJECTS. THIS EFFORT SHOULD BE INTENSIFIED. IF THIS WERE DONE, THE AVAILABILITY OF PROJECTS, WHILE ALWAYS A NECESSARY ELEMENT IN ALLOCATING IDA FUNDS, MIGHT NOT PRESENT AS SERIOUS AN IMPEDIMENT TO IDA LENDING. INDEED, IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT COUNTRIES WHO HAVE THE GREATEST DIFFICULTY PREPARING PROJECTS ARE THOSE MOST IN NEED OF IDA'S HELP.

PERFORMANCE - UNDER THIS PRESENT IDA CRITERION, A COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC RESOURCE ALLOCATION SHOULD BE AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION. FOR INSTANCE, THE EXTENT TO WHICH A COUNTRY IS DEVOTING ITS RESOURCES TO MEETING THE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS OF ITS POOR AND TO BASIC INVESTMENTS LEADING TO EQUITABLE GROWTH AND GREATER SELF-SUFFICIENCY COULD BE INCLUDED.

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CONCLUSION - THE UNITED STATES, THEREFORE, BELIEVES THAT
THE DISTRIBUTION OF IDA V ASSISTANCE WHILE RESTING ON THE
TRADITIONAL IDA LENDING CRITERIA, SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF
SEVERAL NEW CONSIDERATIONS. U.S. REPRESENTATIVES WOULD
BE PLEASED TO DISCUSS THESE THOUGHTS WITH BANK MANAGEMENT

AND STAFF, AND THE OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES, AS EFFORTS PRO-
CEED TO DETERMINE THE BASIS FOR IDA LENDING. END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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